

COMBINED CONTRACEPTIVE TABLETS (Qlaira®)

What does it do?

Combined contraceptive tablets contain the hormones oestrogen and progestogen. They are used to prevent pregnancy or regulate your period. They may also be used to treat polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) or acne.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have heart, liver, or gallbladder problems, migraines, or high blood pressure.
- Tell your doctor if you have had a blood clot or stroke, or if you smoke.
- Women taking *combined contraceptive tablets* may have a small increased risk of breast cancer. Tell your doctor if you, or someone in your family, has ever had breast cancer.

How should you take it?

Your pack has 26 active hormone tablets and 2 inactive tablets.

When you first start, take a hormone tablet on the first day of your period so that you are protected from pregnancy straight away. If you start at any other time you will need to use condoms (or don't have sex) for the next 9 days.

Take your tablet at the same time each day.

What if you forget a dose?

The missed dose instructions for Qlaira® are slightly different compared to other *combined contraceptive tablets*. See the company's information at the Medsafe website (www.medsafe.govt.nz/consumers/cmi/q/qlaira.pdf)

Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *combined contraceptive tablets* including:

- orlistat (Xenical®)

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort) or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Symptoms of a blood clot including: sudden shortness of breath, swelling or pain in one leg Symptoms of a stroke including: sudden weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side, face drooping, sudden changes in vision or speech, sudden loss of balance Severe headache Chest pain	Tell your doctor immediately
Changes in periods Mood changes, headache Sore breasts Weight gain Brown patches on the face Stomach upset	Tell your doctor if troublesome

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- If you vomit or have very bad diarrhoea within 2 hours of taking your tablet, follow the instructions in the "What if you forget a dose?" section.
- *Combined contraceptive tablets* do not protect you from sexually transmitted infections.
- Taking *combined contraceptive tablets* doesn't make it harder to get pregnant if you want to later on.
- *Combined contraceptive tablets* are also known as *combined oral contraceptives* (COC) and "the pill".